

Who is Israel?

In all walks of life, Christian and non Christian alike, people have the assumed belief that the chosen people of God has to be the physical nation of Israel located in the Middle East. The truth is, Israel is the name of God's chosen people, however, the problem lies in as to WHO can claim the name Israel? The Scriptures actually touch on this topic quite openly. Since this is a name given by God to Jacob in Genesis 32:28, where it says, "...Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." We need to dig into Scripture to see why God took time to do such a thing.

Turns out, Jacob's perfect repentance of the sin he had committed against his brother Esau, as well as making the final decision that we are also all called to wrestle with in life, by professing the Lord thy God as His eternal guide, allowed him this blessing. His transgression was forgiven as God promises all of us, and since his sin was so perfectly purged, he could now endure God's presence as well as the eternal name of Israel, as given by the very lips of God. In other words, those that repent and seek Christ as Lord will also carry the name of Israel throughout eternity. However, to make it easier to understand for those that may disagree with me on this, and for those that seek a thus saith the Lord, what does the Bible say about the name, Israel? Will it always be for the physical nation of Israel? Or are there certain stipulations laid out in Scripture that must be met before the name can be claimed? And can the name ever be taken away from a people if they step out of God's will? Amazing at it may seem to some, prophecy touches on this very topic.

- In Genesis 49:10 we read the prophetic statement that, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

Shiloh, or as we call Him today, "Jesus," came as prophesied and all the people did in fact gather to Him as both Scripture and history record. In Hosea 2:23 the Lord states, "...I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God."

At one time the Gentiles were not considered the people of God. In fact they were considered unclean by the Jewish nation. But after Jesus worked, died, resurrected and ascended, three and a half years later probation ended for the Jewish nation as Daniel the prophet predicted would happen 490 years after Jerusalem was allowed to be rebuilt in 457BC. Peter then received the vision of the sheet coming down three times which he later translates and explains to Cornelius in Acts 10:28. He explains that the Lord was declaring the three Gentile men knocking on his door at that moment were now cleansed and to be considered God's people and worthy of the Holy Spirit. When Jesus first arrived and started to share His Gospel truth, most of the leaders of the physical nation of Israel rejected Him, and as we can see today, that same physical nation still rejects Him, yet we find Jesus has been accepted by what that same nation still calls Gentiles in every other nation. His Gospel message has spread world wide just as He prophesied it would.

The prophetic statement declared in Genesis and Hosea is also repeated by Jesus Christ Himself in Matthew 21:43 when He is speaking to the Jews. He clearly says that, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." The fact the fruits have now grown into a global forest of believers proves this prophetic statement fulfilled and absolute truth. Later in Acts 13:46 we find the prophecy regarding having the Kingdom of God taken from "physical Israel" straightforwardly fulfilled when Paul and Barnabas are being ridiculed

and reproached by the Jews one day with blasphemous statements as they try to share the Gospel message. So on that fateful day, Paul and Barnabas turned to the Jews that were speaking out and said, "...It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."

In Romans 2:28,29 we learn that, "...he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God. "

A few chapters later in Romans 9:6-8 it says that, "...they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

In other words, you are not guaranteed Heaven simply because you are born into a Jewish family. Peering into this reality at its base elements, a family is nothing more than a flesh generated unit. It is not a spiritual entity claiming spiritual things. It's just a family name. As Christians we know that the "flesh" has no claim on Christ, nor can it ever lay claim because John 4:24 says "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." (Romans 8:5) "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Galatians 5:17) Only those that understand, profess, and believe the promise can be called heirs and citizens of Israel.

Galatians 3:29 says that "if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." What is this promise you ask? Galatians 3:14 says, "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

And finally, Galatians 3:26-29 says, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

It was believed by physical Israel that to be Israel was a birthright and beyond the grasp of all those outside their camp. Yet here we see Paul clearly stating that all that claim Christ Lord are of Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. Paul tells them it doesn't matter if you're a Jew or a Greek, bond or free, or even male or female. He was explicit so as to erase all doubt regarding the age old tradition brought on by the Pharisees regarding their assumed God given heavenly ethnicity. Paul plainly says if you follow CHRIST, then you are of Abraham's seed. According to the Pharisee of old, to be of Abraham's seed simply means you are ISRAEL.

Notice what Jesus Himself said to the Jews one day 2000 year ago...

It's recorded in Mark 12:1-12, "And he began to speak unto them by parables. A certain man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country. And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard. And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent

him away shamefully handled. And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some. Having yet therefore one son, his wellbeloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard. What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? **he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.** And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people: for **they knew that he had spoken the parable against them:** and they left him, and went their way."


Jesus clearly stated the Jews would lose their favored nation status, but not because of the way they ridiculed, harmed and even killed the prophets of old when the Lord sent them to share His Truth with them and all men. For if it was for this reason, Jesus the Son of God would never have come to them to share the Gospel message in the first place. They were about to kill Him, even though this was just a thought running through their minds for now. The sad thing here is these men of the cloth understood the parable Jesus just shared because the Scriptures clearly say here that THEY KNEW He was speaking of them. They knew the certain man in the parable was God, they knew the vineyard was the Jewish nation, they knew the hedge was the Law of God and their keeping it was the reason God protected them, they knew the tower was the Temple, they knew husbandmen were themselves, they knew the servants were the prophets they harmed and killed in the past and they knew the far country was Heaven. They even knew when Messiah would come He would seek the fruits of their labors for Him. But they had no idea the Son of God was standing before them at that moment. Had they not feared the people, they would have taken Him outside the vineyard at that time and killed Him.

Now.. don't get me wrong. I am not saying all Jews are headed for hell. The Jews, like any other nation as Paul confirmed earlier, have the same gift of salvation offered to them completely free of charge because of what Jesus did on Calvary.

If the Jewish nation, or any other people accept Jesus Christ as Lord, then they too will be found in the City of Heaven for all eternity. 2 Timothy 2:10 says to all the world that, "...they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." Truth is, even Christians can lose the name "Israel" if they deny the Lord as did the Jews of old. For it is written in Hebrews 10:26-27 that, "...if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." So please don't send me emails declaring me anti-Semite. Truth be known, if a Jew or a Christian denies God and steps out of His will, they will stand judged worthy of Hellfire. If it was a guarantee that all you needed to do was claim to be in the nation of Israel, why would "Esaiahs also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, **a remnant shall be saved.**" (Romans 9:27)

For those that take no stock in all the Scriptures I just shared, I say, sheer common sense grants us the obvious answer here. I ask, how can the physical Jewish nation be considered the chosen people of God when they openly deny His only begotten Son Jesus Christ as Messiah and go directly against God's biblical definition of Israel? You cannot be Israel and deny Jesus Christ at the same time any more then you can stand at midnight while declaring it to be noon. Ever wonder why Satan would want people to believe those that deny Jesus Christ are the chosen Israel of today? Look around! All the prophecies that speak of Israel have been twisted out of context causing people to watch the land of Israel for signs instead of watching the true Israel and how the prophecies are actually being fulfilled. This smokescreen has

literally billions ignoring the true fulfillments for the manufactured false ones so as to be unready when Christ finally does return. As many are aware, the true Israel of God are persecuted and ridiculed for their Christian faith by the most powerful nations on earth. Laws are drafted against our Bibles, our speech and our faith. Yet the physical Israel that deny God's only begotten Son are protected and honored by these very same nations. Even the governments of this world have been used by the enemy of souls to convince many to look in the wrong direction.

 Now that we know the true Israel is the Christian believer, what does the Lord command His people will do THOUGHTOUT their generations?

- 'Verily My Sabbaths ye shall keep,' the Lord declared, 'for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.'
- Matthew 3:9-10, "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

One last thing...

- Jeremiah 31:35-37, "Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: **If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.** Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will

also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD."

The prophet Jeremiah declared if the Jewish people were to turn their backs on God, He would remove them as a "nation before me for ever." They did turn their backs on Him when He sent them His only begotten Son. Plus, David saw in Psalms a similar fate for the Jews that ignored the obvious hand of God upon them those 40 years.

- Psalms 95:7-11, "For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work. Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways: Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest."

For questions, inquiries and further studies:

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